

Middletown Economic Development Advisory Committee

Wednesday, September 14, 2011, 5:00 pm

Middletown Town Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Joseph A. Cirillo (exp. 1/13)_x_

7 Samson Lane

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Robert A. Connerney (exp.1/14)___

9 Renfrew Park

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Helen F. Flynn (exp. 1/13)___

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Liana Ferreira Fenton (exp.1/14)_x_

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Tom Kowalczyk (exp. 1/13)_x_

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Robert M. Silva (exp. 1/16)_x__

1100 Aquidneck Ave.

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Mike Hill (exp. 1/13) __x__

Art Weber, Town Council Rep. ex-officio_x__

Chris Semonelli, Town Council Rep. ex-officio _x_

Jody Sullivan__x_

Newport County Chamber of Commerce – ex-officio

keith@newportchamber.com

Ron Wolanski, Town Planner – ex-officio_x_ _

rwolanski@middletownri.com

Others present:

Shawn Brown

1. Discuss status of MEDAC consultant and staffing.

Mr. Wolanski stated that there is ongoing review by the Town Administrator regarding economic development staffing, whether be consultant or town staff. A proposal will be brought the committee for review and comment when available.

2. Discuss possible feasibility study for a Newport County convention center.

Mr. Wolanski stated that he has contacted RIEDC to seek funding assistance. His efforts will continue, and more information will be provided when available.

3. Discuss proposed modification to the town's economic development tax incentive program to address hospitality.

Mr. Wolanski stated that he has begun researching incentive programs, but has found only project-specific incentive agreements, not incentive programs. He will continue researching.

4. Update on RIDLT training grant.

Mr. Wolanski updated the committee on the status of the grant. SENEDIA is the lead grant recipient, and will coordinate all activities.

MEDAC's role will be supportive, and to assist with outreach to the business community as needed.

5. Discuss possible MEDAC role in high school-business mentoring program.

Mr. Semonelli suggested that MEDAC could assist with outreach to the business community. Other members agreed. The committee and staff will assist as appropriate upon request.

6. Discuss outreach, including MEDAC website and schedule of outreach meetings to local businesses.

Moving forward on these and other efforts will depend on staffing.

7. Update on West Main/Coddington Redevelopment Master Plan.

Mr. Wolanski stated that the plan has been completed and will be presented to the Town Council in public session on September 19th. All are welcome.

8. Update on Aquidneck Corporate Park improvement project.

Improvements are nearing completion. Final work on the signs and landscaping is underway.

9. Additional business –

Discussion of the 2012 America's Cup and Tall Ships events in Newport.

Mr. Brown asked if the Town should take an active role in attempting to capitalize on the events, or simply assist with efforts of traffic control and parking.

Mr. Sullivan stated that the Chamber will be preparing a visitors guide for the events. The town could participate in that effort.

There was discussion of the town hosting an evening event, such as a clambake at second beach, or providing a venue for a business promotion event.

A MEDAC subcommittee was suggested. Mr. Weber, Mr. Semonelli, Ms. Fenton, and Ms. Sullivan volunteered to serve with MR. Wolanski and Mr. Brown.

Mr. Weber referenced other items:

The Town Council will reconsider the wind turbine moratorium during it's September 19th meeting.

There is a potential new buyer for the BayRidge condo development.

Meeting adjourned 6pm

Respectfully submitted

Ronald M. Wolanski

Director of Planning & Economic Development